

## ABSTRACT

A directory shell references one or more directories. Each directory comprises a plurality of directory objects each having object attributes and attribute data. One or more categories in the directory shell is associated with one or more directory objects and at least a portion of the associated object attribute. A user interface is operable for a user to query the categories in the directory shell. A directory interface is operable to send a search request to the directories in accordance with the query and receive data from the directories that satisfy the search request.

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